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Lehtimaja, Inkeri

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Encouraging participation or restraining teasing? Teacher responses to uninvited students' answers

Inkeri Lehtimaja and Liisa Tainio

Contact author: Inkeri Lehtimaja, Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, P.O. Box 4, 00014 University of Helsinki, Finland. Email:

inkeri.lehtimaja@helsinki.fi

Abstract

In a second-language classroom, it is beneficial for learning to encourage student participation. However, the teacher has to consider issues of equal participation and moral order. Drawing on a corpus of Finnish as a second language lessons for teenage students and adopting a conversation analytic approach, this article examines situations in which the students produce uninvited, teasing answers on behalf of other students. We focus especially on teacher responses: the teachers either ignore, ratify or sanction the uninvited answers. In our analysis, we show how the participants negotiate the right to answer, and how the teachers take into account the turn-taking rules of classroom interaction and the ongoing pedagogical activity, as well as moral considerations. In the article, ignoring the uninvited answer is treated as a default teacher response, since it corresponds to norms of prototypical classroom interaction. However, the teacher can ratify an uninvited answer if it is useful for pedagogical purposes, or s/he can sanction an uninvited answer if it is unacceptable for classroom talk or if the target of the teasing turn displays embarrassment. While participating in pedagogical activities, the students pursue their own social goals at the same time. This social dimension can promote learning but needs to be handled with care by the teacher.

Keywords: classroom interaction; conversation analysis; moral order; student initiatives; teacher's agenda; teasing; uninvited answer

1 Introduction

In prototypical classroom interaction, both the teacher and the students orient, in general, to a particular turn-taking system and participation framework, in which the teacher asks questions and designates one student at a time to answer (e.g. Mehan 1979). The aim of this interactional structure is to control the multi-party situation in a way that allows the students to have equal possibilities to participate in the conversation (Sahlström 1999). It happens quite often, however, that students transgress the conventions and take self-initiated, uninvited turns in answering the teacher's questions, even when another student has been selected by the teacher to give an answer.

Answers given on behalf of other students are common during lessons of Finnish as a second language (FL2) in lower secondary school, where the interaction is often very lively (Lehtimaja 2011; see also Schwab 2011). It is typical that the students compete actively for answering turns and give alternative or complementary answers. This allows the construction of knowledge in a collaborative manner and is beneficial for the progression of the lesson. Yet the teacher has to take care that the participation rights of all students are respected and that credit for the answer is given to the right person. It is also characteristic of these lessons that the teacher encourages a genuine multi-party conversation about a topic that interests the students, in order to increase their fluency in Finnish. During these discussions, the turn-taking norms of classroom interaction are often loosened in favour of maximum participation. However, the teacher has to once again monitor that the participation is distributed in an equitable manner and that the conversation follows certain moral principles (for moral work

in professional practice, see e.g. Cromdal and Tholander 2012). For example, in some circumstances it can be problematic to speak on behalf of other participants, since claiming to know the inner thoughts or feelings of someone can be a way to tease or even to bully the target of the talk (Keltner *et al.* 2001).

In this article, we analyse how teachers respond to students' self-initiated turns in which a student answers a question on behalf of another student during FL2 lessons. We will present three types of responses: the teachers either (1) ignore the self-initiated student turn; (2) ratify it; or (3) sanction it. By adopting conversation analysis (CA) as our method (e.g. Sidnell and Stivers 2013), we will show how teachers' responses are related – in addition to the turn-taking rules of classroom interaction – to the ongoing pedagogical activity and to moral and ethical questions. We explore teacher responses with respect to (1) the content of the student turn in reference to the teacher's own pedagogic agenda; (2) the content of the student turn in terms of its appropriateness for classroom talk; and (3) the reactions of the target of the turn, which is often teasing. The main objective of the analysis is to shed light on how the teacher uses various evaluative response turns in different contexts to regulate the interaction and to publicly display her/his orientation towards the pedagogical goals and moral norms of classroom interaction.

We begin by presenting previous work on students' uninvited response turns, after which we introduce our data and the method used. In the analysis section, we focus first on cases where the teacher ignores students' uninvited answers. Then, we move on to teachers ratifying student initiatives, and finally to teachers sanctioning them. In conclusion, we discuss the pedagogical and social implications of teachers' different response strategies.

2 Literature review

Previous studies have emphasized the importance of the three-part activity known as the

initiation-response-evaluation/feedback (IRE/F) sequence for the organization of classroom interaction (see e.g. Mehan 1979). Traditionally, in this sequence the first and the third positions are the teacher's turns, with the second position being the student's turn. The IRE structure also forms the basis of the turn-taking organization of classroom settings (McHoul 1978). The speaker of the student's response turn can either be selected by the teacher, or, if the teacher's initiation turn is oriented to the whole class, students can select themselves as next speakers. When a student is nominated by the teacher to produce the response turn, s/he usually has an exclusive right to give a response; only if s/he fails to do so, or if the response is considered insufficient by the teacher, will the teacher explicitly select a new speaker. This interactional structure, aimed to assure a certain order in the classroom and to regulate the student participation in an equal manner, at the same time restricts the students' possibilities for participating.

Even though the prototypical structure described above is often oriented to by the participants, students also take initiatives to give responses in a situation in which another student has been given a turn. Waring (2011: 208) identifies uninvited voluntary responses as one type of possible learner initiatives. One form of these are what she calls *step in* initiatives, where a student either steps in as the class representative when the teacher directs the question to the entire class, or takes up a response slot entirely designed for another (see also Hazel and Mortensen 2017: 220). This article offers a specification of the latter type of student initiatives: cases where a student steps in and appropriates a response slot designed for another student.

From the students' perspective, giving uninvited responses is one way of enlarging the restrictive participation framework (Goffman 1981; Goodwin and Goodwin 2004) of prototypical classroom interaction. The advantages can first of all be academic gains. The opportunities for participation have often been linked to the opportunities for learning (e.g.

Waring 2008), and in classrooms where participation is part of the assessment criteria (as it is in the Finnish school system), increasing one's own possibilities for participation is also a means of influencing one's academic success. Secondly, modifying the participation framework also has social consequences. Prototypical classroom interaction is a two-way phenomenon between the teacher and the students; interaction among students is not considered, since they are not encouraged to address each other directly. However, peer relations are of utmost importance for teenagers. Talking to each other indirectly during the lessons, for example by commenting on other students' answers, is an important part of doing relational work at school.

Teachers' attitude towards the organization of interaction is largely influenced by the pedagogical focus of the ongoing activity. According to Seedhouse (2004: 102), when the focus of a language lesson is on form and accuracy, it is normally essential for the teacher to have tight control of the turn-taking system. In this context, the students have no leeway in terms of the content of their turns or even the forms they use: deviations from the production envisaged by the teacher can lead to teacher conducting repair (Seedhouse 2004: 105). By contrast, when the focus is on meaning and fluency, the aim is on maximizing the opportunities for interaction (Seedhouse 2004: 111). In this latter context, there is a great amount of variation in the interactional organization. The teacher promotes freedom of expression and can give a certain degree of control over turn taking to the students, but, in order to take into account all students in the group, s/he might still nominate other students to speak while remaining within the topic (Seedhouse 2004: 115). One way for the teachers to exercise control over the turn-taking system and the content of the student turns is by evaluating students' uninvited answers either positively or negatively (or not evaluating them at all).

3 Data and method

Our data consist of ten video-recorded lessons of Finnish as a second language in three secondary schools in southern Finland. Ethical approval was granted by the school authorities and informed consent was obtained from all participants; the names in the transcriptions are pseudonyms. There are three different teachers (one male and two females) and five different groups, each comprising five to ten students. A total of 39 students (25 girls and 14 boys) participated, ranging in age from 14 to 18 years. The students represent various national groups. They have lived in Finland for only a few years, and their language skills are not yet sufficient for studying in a Finnish school without special support. However, they are fully socialized in the normative character of turn-taking organization in a classroom setting.

Conversation analysis (CA) has often been used as a method for analysing interaction in classrooms (see e.g. Gardner 2013), including second/foreign language classrooms (e.g. Seedhouse 2004; Waring 2008, 2011). The departure point of CA studies is analysing naturally occurring interaction. CA focuses on tracking activities that demonstrate how the interactants themselves construct and interpret each other's conduct in the course of a conversation. Both verbal and non-verbal interaction are therefore equally important.

4 Analysis

In this section, we examine students' self-initiated turns produced as answers on behalf of another student, and we illustrate the ways in which teachers respond to them. We present three main types of teacher responses: ignoring, ratifying and rejecting the student initiative. In all examples,¹ the teacher poses a personal question to a nominated student. The assigned student displays some reluctance to answering the question, and another student answers on her/his behalf in a more-or-less teasing manner. Through analysing these extracts, we clarify various aspects that affect the ways in which the teacher responds. After the analyses, we

reflect on the functions of teacher responses in terms of the turn-taking organization as well as the moral order of the classroom.

4.1 *Teacher ignores the student's uninvited answer*

Our first examples illustrate cases where the teacher ignores an uninvited answer given by a student on behalf of another student. In a way, these instances represent a default case of the IRE structure: the teacher concentrates on the student whom s/he has selected to answer in the first place, and ignores any self-initiated answers by other students.

In the first extract, the pedagogic agenda is to introduce a discussion about a grammatical rule of Finnish, more specifically when to use the partitive case for a direct object in a sentence. The teacher assigns one student at a time to answer a personal question that is expected to prompt an answer including an object in the partitive case; the teacher's question to Anja in Extract 1 is already the fifth consecutive question of this particular activity. (See Appendix A for transcription conventions, and Appendix B for glossing symbols, such as that which appears at line 8.)

Extract 1: Water

01 Teacher: mitä sä rakastat
what do you love

TEACHER'S GAZE TO ANJA

((4 lines omitted²))

06 Teacher: jo[tain a]sioita.
some things

07 Daniel: [Hamid.]

DANIEL LEANS ON TABLE, HEAD IN ARMS

08 Hamidia se rakastaa.

- Hamid(PAR) s/he love(3pS)
it's Hamid she loves
- 09 (0.8)
- 10 Anja: °em↑mä +↓tiedä,°
I don't know
 ANJA'S GAZE TO TEACHER
 +ANJA'S GAZE TO TABLE
 +DANIEL RAISES HEAD, GAZE TO HAMID
- 11 (0.8)
- 12 Anja: °vet+tä tai +(he he)°
 water(PAR)
water he he
 +DANIEL LOWERS HEAD TO ARMS,
 FACE TOWARDS ANJA
 +ANJA BENDS HEAD DOWNWARDS
- 13 Daniel: se rakastaa itteensä tie[°ty(-)°
 s/he love(3pS) self(PAR) of course
she loves herself of course
- 14 Teacher: -> [+vettä.
 water(PAR)
water
 +ANJA RAISES HEAD,
 GAZE TO FRONT
- 15 -> TEACHER TURNS TO WRITE ON THE BOARD

At the beginning of the example, the teacher asks Anja about what she loves (line 1); the verb *rakastaa* ('to love') requires an object in the partitive case. A moment later she specifies that the answer should concern things (as opposed to persons, line 6). Daniel self-selects to propose that Anja loves Hamid, a student present in the class (lines 7–8). The turn includes an object in the partitive case and as such is a suitable answer in the pedagogic context, even though it concerns a person and thus contradicts the teacher's specification (line 6). Daniel's turn is produced head in arms, his face hidden. The posture suggests that it is not a serious proposal for an answer but more of a heckle or a toss-out, aimed at teasing Anja and Hamid. Invoking hypothetical romantic relationships between present students is a common way of peer teasing in the data.

After a short pause (line 9), Anja first produces an answer that does not, however, give the information the teacher is asking for: she answers that she does not know (line 10). She lowers her gaze away from the teacher, which – in addition to the quiet voice – displays disengagement. She is thus delaying her answer or even refusing to give an answer. At the same time, Daniel raises his head to look at Hamid, whom he has just been teasing. After another short pause (line 11), Anja nevertheless gives an answer: *vettä*, the noun 'water' in partitive case (line 12). Her voice is still quiet, and in the end of the turn she laughs a little and lowers her head even more. In this context, the laughter seems to indicate slight embarrassment rather than amusement. Anja does not orient to Daniel's turn, so the embarrassment seems to be related to answering the teacher's question, not to Daniel's teasing. At the same time, Daniel lowers his head to his arms again, but this time with his face turned to Anja. He continues to tease Anja by saying that she loves herself, again including a partitive object form in his sentence (line 13).

The teacher does not react to Daniel's self-initiated turns in any way. She does not ratify the first answer including the partitive case (line 8), and she does not explicitly mark

Daniel's turns as inappropriate either. Instead, she orients to Anja being assigned to give an answer, even though Anja displays some troubles in producing one. When Anja produces an answer that is useful for the purposes of the pedagogic agenda (an object in the partitive case), the teacher ratifies this answer by repeating it with falling intonation (line 14) and writes it on the blackboard (line 15).

In the first example, the assigned student ended up by finally giving an answer to the teacher's question. In Extract 2, by contrast, the assigned student does not really produce an answer – at least not a useful one for the pedagogical agenda of the teacher. During the lesson, the students have read a text dealing with the preferred characteristics of a life companion. The teacher prompts the students to discuss the text and the topic. The aim of this pedagogic activity is to encourage students to express their opinions and to justify them. A couple of students have already talked about their views in a humorous manner, and the teacher has tried to make Agnes take on the topic next, but she has refused. At the beginning of the extract (line 1), the teacher asks Agnes once again about her opinion.

Extract 2: Handsome

- 01 Teacher: onks Agnesilla joku edes
 does Agnes have at least some
 TEACHER'S GAZE TO AGNES,
 AGNES'S GAZE TO TABLE
- 02 (0.4)
- 03 Sareedo: ko[£meaf
 handsome
 SAREEDO'S GAZE TO TEACHER
- 04 Agnes: [ei o

I don't

05 (0.4) SAREEDO TURNS TO AGNES

06 Sareedo: k(h)o[m(h)ea

h(h)ands(h)ome

07 Teacher: -> [ei oo (vai).

you don't (or).

The teacher's elliptical question to Agnes (line 1) refers to an earlier question (what kind of requirements do you have of your future partner?). The question is grammatically in third person, but naming Agnes and gazing at her make it clear that she is selected as the next speaker. Agnes does not answer immediately, and she is not looking back at the teacher. After a short pause (line 2), Sareedo volunteers an answer, mentioning one requirement: the future partner should be handsome (line 3). At this stage, it is not yet clear if she is talking about her own or Agnes's opinion, but since the sequential position of the turn was originally assigned to Agnes, it can be interpreted as talking on Agnes's behalf. Sareedo is looking at the teacher and starts smiling during her turn, thus marking it as humorous.

Almost simultaneously, Agnes offers an answer that is not very useful for the purposes of the teacher's agenda, claiming that she does not have any requirements to tell (line 4). She thus displays reluctance to answering, as she has already done earlier, before this extract. Her gaze is still towards the table. After that, Sareedo turns to look at Agnes and repeats, with laughter, her earlier answer (line 6). Sareedo's gaze suggests that her answer is given on Agnes's behalf, and the non-serious nature of the turn makes it teasing. One way to tease participants is to claim to know their inner thoughts, as this can be interpreted as a playful provocation to comment on something that is relevant to the person (Keltner *et al.* 2001). Agnes still keeps her gaze downwards and does not react to Sareedo's turn.

The teacher ignores Sareedo's uninvited interventions. The assigned student, Agnes, refuses to give an answer, and, furthermore, Sareedo's turn would be a suitable answer to the teacher's question and could serve the pedagogic agenda by bringing up an opinion on the topic. Still, the teacher orients to Agnes being assigned to give an answer. In this way, the teacher shows that her question is genuine: she really wants to hear Agnes's own opinion on the topic, rather than getting any formally suitable answer. However, the teacher does not sanction Sareedo either for her uninvited answer. The teacher ratifies Agnes's response by repeating it, but adds the conjunction *vai* ('or') at the end to make it a request for confirmation, thus giving Agnes still another chance to come around (line 7).

The first two extracts have shown how the teacher maintains the originally assigned answering turn and ignores other students' self-initiated answers given on behalf of the assigned student, even when the assigned student delays answering or refuses to answer. The ignored answers might, at least to some extent, be suitable and useful answers to the teacher's question. However, they also contain inappropriate elements. First, the teacher's questions concern personal opinions and thoughts, and it is thus problematic for other students to claim to know the answers on behalf of their fellow students. The ignored turns are also framed as non-serious, and it is thus possible to interpret them as teasing. However, the teacher does not explicitly judge the turns as inappropriate: s/he does not reprimand the self-selecting students for violating the classroom turn-taking rules or for producing a response contradictory to the teacher's directions (Daniel in Extract 1). Neither does the teacher take a stand on the self-selecting students' teasing of their peers.

4.2 Teacher ratifies the student's uninvited answer

The next two examples represent cases where the teacher ratifies an uninvited answer given on behalf of another student. The teacher thus yields the preference to keep the originally

assigned answering turn, and accepts that another student gives an answer.

Extract 3 illustrates how the teacher ratifies the student initiative even though it occurs as a second response to a teacher initiative that was originally addressed to another student. This extract is a continuation of Extract 1, where the teacher was asking questions in order to prompt answers including a syntactical object in partitive case. The next question is addressed to Lauri.

Extract 3: Computer

01 Teacher: öö Lauri. mitä sä ajattelet.

uhm Lauri. What are you thinking about.

LAURI GAZES DOWN AT THE TABLE

02 Lauri: +en mitään

NEG(verb,1pS) what(PAR)+(NEG POL)

nothing

+HAMID TURNS BACKWARDS TO LOOK AT LAURI

03 Hamid: tietokonet+ta(h) .hh

computer(PAR)

about a computer

+HAMID TURNS SIDEWARDS,

GAZE TO RAFIK

04 Teacher: -> tieto+konet[ta.

computer(PAR)

about a computer

+HAMID TURNS TO FRONT

05 Hamid: [.hh

-> TEACHER TURNS TO WRITE ON THE BOARD

In line 1, the teacher poses a question, using the transitive verb *ajatella*, ‘to think,’ which calls for an answer in the partitive case. The teacher addresses this question to Lauri, who looks at his desk and responds by using a syntactical construction that contains a pronoun in the partitive case (line 2). However, his answer is not very helpful in terms of teaching the partitive case because the construction is idiomatic and neither morphologically nor syntactically fully transparent to language learners. Furthermore, while it should be clear to the students at this stage that the pedagogic aim of the ongoing activity is to produce nouns functioning as objects and thus marked with certain cases, Lauri’s reply implies that he is reluctant to become involved in this activity. In other words, Lauri treats the teacher’s question as if it were genuine, rather than a question that falls within a form-and-accuracy context (Seedhouse 2004: 102–111) in which the orientation is more to the form and less to the meaning.

Immediately after this, another student, Hamid, volunteers an alternative answer that is a noun in the correct case (line 3). Hamid’s response is useful for the purposes of the teacher’s agenda, because the partitive case of the noun *tietokone*, ‘computer,’ is transparent (suffix *-ta*³). This answer is subsequently ratified by the teacher (line 4); she repeats Hamid’s answer with a falling intonation and thus marks the answer as having been accepted and the IRE structure as having been fulfilled (Hellermann 2003). She also writes Hamid’s answer on the blackboard (line 5).

However, Hamid’s turn is doing more than merely answering on Lauri’s behalf. While uttering his answer, Hamid turns to look at Lauri (line 3). This embodied conduct indicates that Hamid’s turn, even though it is produced as a response to the teacher’s question, is at the same time addressed to Lauri; Lauri can be considered as a secondary

recipient of the turn. During his answer, Hamid also laughs briefly (lines 3 and 5), and thus marks the utterance as humorous (see also Extract 2). Hamid talks on Lauri's behalf, claiming to know his inner thoughts, which is a way to tease him (Keltner *et al.* 2001). The content of Hamid's turn can be interpreted as teasing: to claim that someone is thinking about a computer even when it is not relevant depicts a portrait of a stereotypical nerd. Hamid thus associates Lauri with a non-desirable quality, which is typical of teasing (Keltner *et al.* 2001). While turning back from Lauri towards the teacher, Hamid gazes at another student, Rafik, as if searching for an audience for his teasing turn (line 3). Lauri does not display any reaction to Hamid's turn: he continues to look at the table with a neutral facial expression.

Nevertheless, the teacher ignores the possible aspects of humour and teasing in Hamid's answer, and orients instead to it as an expected and appropriate contribution to the teaching and learning of grammar. She thus shows retrospectively that her question was not a genuine one: she is not so much interested in learning what Lauri is really thinking about as in getting a grammatically suitable answer to her question. Hence, the pedagogical focus of the activity and its form-and-accuracy context (Seedhouse 2004: 102–111) seems to affect the teacher's actions.

In the previous example, the teacher ignored the pedagogically less useful answer of the assigned student and instead accepted the uninvited but pedagogically useful response of another student. In Extract 4, the situation is somewhat different, since the teacher is neither asking a question nor assigning a student for answering. Instead, a student volunteers to answer the teacher's previous question on behalf of a student he designates himself. Hence, this example does not follow a typical IRE sequence. The example is a continuation of Extract 2, where the teacher has asked Agnes about what she expects of her future partner and Sareedo has answered on Agnes's behalf. Immediately after this, a third student, Dilton, suggests that he can answer the same question on Sareedo's behalf.

Extract 4: Bling bling man

01 Teacher: [ei oo (vai)

you don't (or)

TEACHER'S GAZE TO AGNES

02 Dilton: [Sareedo mä tiedän +minkä+lai-

Sareedo I know what kind of-

+SAREEDO GAZES

AT DILTON

+DILTON GAZES

AT SAREEDO

03 Dilton: se: se: +sil o

s/he: s/he: s/he has

+DILTON'S GAZE TO TEACHER

04 (0.5)

05 Sareedo: kerro+

tell

+SAREEDO'S GAZE TO TEACHER

06 Dilton: jos se haluaa [(--)

if she wants [(--)

07 Teacher: [Sareedo vai

[you mean Sareedo

08 Dilton: nii kyl mä [tiedän (semmotti [kauhee)

well I do [know (the kind of [really)

09 Hibo: [kerro meille=

[tell us=

10 Nawal: [=>kerro kerro<

[=>tell tell<

11 (0.6)

12 Dilton: >kauhee semmotti:< (.) +bling bling mies

>really the kind of:< (.) bling bling man

+DILTON GLANCES

AT SAREEDO

13 ((LAUGHTER))

14 Sareedo: (£KA:UHEE:) (+olet oikeassa£)

(£TERR:IBLE:)(you are right£)

+SAREEDO GLANCES AT DILTON

15 (0.8) SAREEDO LEANS BACKWARDS

HAND IN FRONT OF MOUTH, CHIN DOWN

((30 lines omitted))

46 Teacher: -> hiphop mies mil on paljo £sormuksia£.

hiphop man who has lots of rings

The participants construct this sequence as a continuation of the teacher's prior line of questioning. The teacher has been asking the same question (what kind of expectations do you have of your future partner?) to several students, but not yet Sareedo. It is Dilton who chooses Sareedo as the next target of the conversation, but instead of addressing the question to Sareedo or directly giving an answer on her behalf, he just expresses that he knows what Sareedo's answer would be. While the teacher ratifies Agnes's answer (line 1, see also Extract 2), Dilton takes a self-selected turn (lines 2–3). He starts his turn by naming Sareedo,

and thus gets her attention (Sareedo gazes at Dilton). However, he refers to Sareedo in third person, so his turn is addressed to the teacher and the rest of the class (although he glances briefly at Sareedo). He continues the humorous and teasing mode that Sareedo herself has initiated (see Extract 2 above). Dilton implies that he knows what Sareedo is thinking and that he might reveal it: his turn starts a pre-sequence (Schegloff 2007) projecting an answer given on Sareedo's behalf. Sareedo accepts Dilton's initiation and encourages Dilton to tell what he claims to know (line 5).

As a consequence, the teacher ratifies the direction and the participation framework that Dilton has suggested by asking him for a confirmation (line 7). She thus gives space to Dilton to answer on Sareedo's behalf. The other students actively participate and prompt Dilton to go on (lines 9–10), and Dilton reveals the high point of his teasing: Sareedo wants a 'bling bling man' (line 12). His turn causes general laughter in the class (line 13). In response, Sareedo accepts Dilton's claim by laughing and going along with him (Drew 1987), confirming humorously that Dilton is right (line 14). After this, there is a clarification sequence where the students explain to the teacher the meaning of the term 'bling bling' (omitted from the transcript due to lack of space). In the end of the sequence the teacher ratifies the description given by Dilton by paraphrasing his suggestion (line 46).

In this example, the teacher not only ratifies afterwards an answer given on behalf of another student, but also gives permission to a student beforehand to produce it. The focus of the pedagogic activity is on meaning and fluency (Seedhouse 2004: 111–118), and the teacher's aim is to stimulate a discussion on the given topic. Dilton's initiation serves this pedagogical agenda, since it draws several students to participate in the discussion (e.g. to explain the term 'bling bling'). He volunteers to present another point of view for the discussion, and the target of the talk (Sareedo) explicitly approves. In this case, the teacher allows the talk as part of the common discussion. The teasing nature of the talk does not seem

4.3 Teacher sanctions the student's uninvited answer

In Extract 5, the teacher rejects a student's self-initiated turn even though the answer could have been useful for the purposes of the pedagogic activity. As in Extracts 1 and 3, the agenda in this extract is to practice the selection and formation of the object case. Adopting the same pedagogic strategy as earlier, the teacher addresses her question to Daniel.

01 Teacher: mitä sä harrastat.
what(PAR) you [verb](2pS, TRANS, 'do as a hobby')

02 Daniel: £haluutsä tosiaan tietää mitä mä
£do you really want to know my leisure

04 Teacher: (↑joo.)
↑yea.

19

+DANIEL TURNS HEAD TO SIDE, STILL SMILING

+DANIEL DROPS HEAD DOWN

ON HIS ARM ON THE TABLE

06 Teacher: -> £↓no:h,£

PRT

£↓*now that's enough*, £

07 Daniel: +.hh £no >emmä tiiä< jalkapalloo£ he he

PRT verb(NEG,1pS)+know soccer(PAR,
colloquial form)

£well I dunno I play soccer£ he he

+DANIEL RAISES PROMPTLY HIS HEAD AND TORSO

08 Teacher: jalkapalloa↑ mm↑

soccer(PAR)

soccer↑ okay↑

After the teacher's question in line 1, the addressed student, Daniel, initiates a playful mode and begins a side sequence by asking whether he may treat the teacher's question as being genuine (lines 2–3). The teacher accepts that request (line 4). At this point, Shirin immediately volunteers an uninvited answer, talking on behalf of Daniel (line 5). Shirin's turn continues the playful mode and it is pronounced in a marked tone of voice, as it is delivered in a high pitch and is accompanied by laughter. The content of the turn (having sex) can also be interpreted as marking the playful mode, since the sexual habits of the students are not something that is usually discussed in the class. Shirin is thus teasing Daniel. During Shirin's turn, Daniel leans his head down on his arm, laughing silently (lines 5–6). After Shirin's turn, the teacher rejects Shirin's suggestion by uttering the particle *no* ('well') in a

judging tone of voice (line 6). This particle is used to express a reproach in Finnish conversations, including those that occur in classroom settings (Tainio 2011). Claiming that another student is in the habit of having sex during his leisure time is thus treated by the teacher as a statement that is inappropriate.

After the teacher's turn, Daniel raises his head, looks at the teacher, and produces an answer to her original initiation (line 7). He starts his turn with a mitigating expression *emmä tiiä* ('I don't know') and then gives a suitable noun in the partitive form. His answer is still marked as humorous since he is laughing. This might suggest that he is deliberately giving a non-genuine but appropriate answer to the teacher's question. What is interesting is that Shirin's answer could actually be useful in terms of form-and-accuracy because it is a noun phrase in the partitive case. However, the teacher verbally abandons it and picks up Daniel's answer, which also contains the required form. Daniel's answer is thus treated as one that is more suitable for the classroom discourse in terms of its content. Furthermore, it was produced by the student who was originally assigned to produce the answer. The teacher accepts Daniel's answer by repeating it and modifying it slightly from the colloquial form (*jalkapallo+o*) to a standard form (*jalkapallo+a*) (line 8), which is more useful for the purposes of the pedagogic agenda (since the case ending *-a* is clearly visible in the standard form).

Extract 6 follows Extracts 2 and 4. The teacher is trying to involve Yusuf in the discussion and has asked him several times about what he would require of his future partner. His classmates are particularly eager to participate in the discussion and consequently produce several self-initiated turns.

Extract 6: He wants me

01 Teacher: *mitä (.) *nii minkälaisia minkälaisia

what (.) yes what kind of what kind of

*TEACHER BENDS DOWN TOWARDS YUSUF

*TEACHER STRAIGHTENS HER BACK

02 vaatimuksia,
requirements (you have),

03 Sareedo: +£se sano Ceci+lia.£
£he say Cecilia.£

+SAREEDO POINTS AT CECILIA, GAZE FORWARD

+SAREEDO GAZES AT CECILIA

04 Cecilia: +£se haluu ↑mĩnä:,£
£he wants ↑I:,£

+CECILIA HITS HER CHEST TWICE

05 Yusuf: *mulla vai.+
what do I have or.

*TEACHER BENDS DOWN TOWARDS YUSUF

+YUSUF SMILES QUICKLY

06 Teacher: -> *ssh heĩ. *+(.) nii. (.) nii sulla.
ssh hey. (.) yes. (.) yes what do you have.

*TEACHER STRAIGHTENS HER BACK

*TEACHER RAISES EYEBROWS, NODS

+CECILIA TURNS LAUGHING TO SAREEDO

07 Hibo: +se haluu +Cecilia.
he wants Cecilia.

+CECILIA GAZES AT YUSUF

+CECILIA GAZES AT HIBO

08 Yusuf: [+ei enkä ha[+luu.

[no I don't wa[nt.

+YUSUF GAZES AT HIBO

+YUSUF GAZES FORWARD

09 Cecilia: [+↓joo, [se haluu +mua.

[↓yes, [he wants me.

+CECILIA GAZES FORWARD

+CECILIA GLANCES

AT YUSUF

10 Sibel: e he he [he

11 Hibo: [>hi hi hi<

12 Teacher: -> hei ↑olkaa hiljaa.

hey ↑be quiet.

After several attempts at prompting an answer from Yusuf, the teacher orients to him both verbally and non-verbally, leaning towards him and asking once again (lines 1–2). Some of the girls, including Cecilia, have already teased Yusuf earlier, in a collaborative manner (Tholander and Aronsson 2002), and now also Sareedo begins teasing Yusuf (lines 3–4). The two girls laugh and intervene with a loud voice, claiming that Yusuf wants Cecilia. Yusuf ignores the girls' teasing and asks the teacher for further clarification of the original question (line 5). This turn seems to function as a delaying strategy, since it should not be unclear that the teacher's question is addressed to Yusuf. He also smiles quickly and slightly awkwardly, which indicates that he is not comfortable with answering the question.

At this point, the teacher rejects the girls' self-initiated turns. She uses the shushing particle together with the particle *hei* ('hey'), which are both used frequently in Finnish

classroom interaction to silence students (Tainio 2011). Once the teacher has clarified her question once again (line 6), yet another girl, Hibo, joins the group of teasers (line 7). Now Yusuf both verbally and non-verbally orients to the claim, and expresses strong disagreement with Hibo (line 8). He thus responds to the teasing in a serious, defensive tone (Tholander and Aronsson 2002). After that, he shifts his gaze ahead, towards the teacher. Yusuf's facial expression displays embarrassment. Cecilia still continues her teasing, and other girls laugh (lines 9–11). At this point, the teacher very specifically requests silence, rejecting the self-initiated turns of the other students (line 12).

During this extract, the teacher rejects the students' self-initiated turns twice. With these turns, the girls tease one of the boys in a sexual/romantic manner by invoking a relationship between participants who are present. First, the teacher mainly ignores the teases, but after the targeted student's disagreement and embarrassment, the teacher rejects the student initiatives more directly. However, even if the teases invoke sexual relationships between the participants present, the teacher does not reject the turns by referring to the inappropriate aspects of the topic. Instead, she handles the situation as if it was merely a violation of turn-taking, which could be solved by returning to the traditional interactional structure of the classroom, where a teacher asks something and a student replies while the others remain quiet. After this extract, the teacher indeed gets an answer from Yusuf.

In Extracts 5 and 6, the teacher explicitly sanctions the student's uninvited response turns given on behalf of another student and thus shows that there is something inappropriate in the turn. However, the way of expressing the sanction differs in the two cases, and this difference reflects the nature of the offence pointed out. In Extract 5, the sanction is realized through a particle commonly used for reproaches and a judging tone of voice. This underlines the moral nature of the student's misdemeanour, that is, talking about the sexual habits of one's classmates. In Extract 6, the teacher rejects the uninvited turns with silencing

techniques. This, by contrast, emphasizes the interactional aspect of student misconduct, i.e., producing uninvited turns in inappropriate sequential environments, and on top of that, abundantly and in a loud voice. While it is true that the interaction at that moment is lively, it is also of interest that the teacher restrains the interaction in a particular situation where the target of the teasing displays indignation in an explicit way.

5 Discussion

In this article, we have analysed teacher responses to students' uninvited answers given on behalf of another student in classrooms of Finnish as a second language (FL2). The answers occurred in a context where the teacher had posed a personal question to a student, and the assigned student showed at least some reluctance to answering the question. The uninvited answers were marked as humorous, and could therefore be interpreted as teasing. Three types of teacher responses were considered: the teacher either ignored, ratified or sanctioned the uninvited answer. In our analysis, we treated ignoring the uninvited answers as a default teacher response, since it is in accordance with the interactional organization (turn-taking structure and participation framework) of prototypical classroom interaction.

Correspondingly, in cases where the teacher either ratified or sanctioned the uninvited answer, we tried to identify the sequential and contextual factors affecting the selection of the response type. The three categories of factors we determined after analysing the data were the regulation of student participation, the pedagogical focus of the ongoing activity, and the moral work of pointing out inappropriate student conduct.

Our analysis shows that even though the assigned student usually has an exclusive right to answer a question, this is renegotiated moment by moment in the unfolding interaction. The selected student can delay her/his answer or refuse the right to answer; the other students can contest the right and compete for the response turn; or the teacher can

transfer the right to another student. As our analysis shows, these possible actions are interdependent to some extent, but the final outcome is a result of more complex interrelationships. In addition to the immediate sequential context, the teacher has to take into account more general participation issues such as equal distribution of opportunities for participation as well as maximization of the overall participation. This can lead the teacher to transgress the interactional norms of classroom conversation by both ratifying some uninvited turns and sanctioning others. Even solely from the point of view of interactional organization, allocating response turns is therefore a delicate balancing task.

Furthermore, when reacting to students' uninvited response turns, the teacher has to consider the pedagogical focus of the interaction. First, the nature of the question can vary according to the pedagogical context. When the focus is on form and accuracy (Seedhouse 2004: 102–111), it is irrelevant from a pedagogical point of view which of the students produces the response turn, as long as a response is given and the lesson can progress. Even questions that in appearance are designed as personal questions can be, in fact, not genuine, but only serve to prompt specific linguistic forms. By contrast, when the focus is on meaning (Seedhouse 2004: 111–118), the students are expected to talk about personal matters, and it is therefore significant which one of the students produces the response turn. Secondly, the teacher has to take into consideration the pedagogical usefulness of the response turn. A response that is suitable for a question in ordinary conversation might not be so according to the teacher's agenda. The criteria of usefulness depends, once again, on the pedagogical context: whether the aim of the activity is to teach a specific linguistic form or structure or to stir up conversation. According to our findings, the teachers can ratify an uninvited response turn if the nature of the question allows a different respondent and/or if the uninvited turn is pedagogically (more) useful (than the original response).

Even though the teacher mainly does not need to react to less useful uninvited

responses, in some cases s/he explicitly sanctions them. Sanctioning a response turn is the teacher's way of doing moral work in the classroom, by pointing out students' misconduct that is considered significant. In our data, the uninvited response turns imply talking on behalf of another student about personal matters in a situation where the assigned student has displayed reluctance to answer, and they are framed as humour; they can therefore be interpreted as teasing. Since there is a fine line between harmless teasing and harmful bullying (Tholander and Aronsson 2002), teachers have to be careful not to let pass insults or harassment as humour. According to our findings, uninvited response turns get sanctioned for two main reasons. In the first place, the content of the response turn can be judged inappropriate. This means that the statement presented on behalf of another student is pointed out as unacceptable in classroom talk in general, regardless of how the targeted student of the teasing reacts to it. In the second place, the response turn can be judged as unacceptable on the basis of the target's – the assigned student's – reaction to the teasing. When the targeted student of the teasing displays clear signs of embarrassment or indignation in relation to the teasing turn, there are grounds for sanctioning the uninvited response turn.

The sanctions are realized in a way that minimizes the hindrance caused to the progress of the lesson (e.g. particles). The grounds for the sanction are not explicitly expressed: the particles only convey the unacceptability of the action on a general level without specifying its cause. There is, however, a difference between particles used mainly for regulating interactional structures (turn taking), such as *shh* for silencing and *hei* for getting attention, and particles used for expressing moral disapproval, such as the stand-alone *no* ('well'). One question that could be examined by future research is whether the teachers prefer to use the more straightforward rules of turn-taking in the classroom as a resource for a delicate negotiation of proper and improper talk (sanctioning the students for producing uninvited turns rather than for producing inappropriate turns).

A possible hierarchy between the three categories identified in our analysis as factors affecting the selection of the teacher's response type also remains to be examined further. To what extent do pedagogical goals overrule the interactional norms of classroom interaction? Are moral considerations stronger factors affecting the interactional organization of the classroom than pedagogical ones?

All in all, our findings show clearly the two dimensions of student participation: while the students participate in the interaction according to the teacher's agenda, on another level they pursue their own social goals by engaging in playful social interaction. For instance, the students treat the questions produced in a form-and-accuracy context as genuine questions, and offer answers on behalf of each other in a teasing manner. These two dimensions are not competing but rather support each other: even if the students were more motivated by doing peer relations than studying Finnish, they still do them using Finnish – often even specific forms or structures – which serves the teacher's agenda. This is the reason why FL2 teachers often favour topics that create lively discussions and self-initiated student contributions. On the other hand, the most interesting topics for teenage students are not always the most appropriate for classroom talk and may be too delicate or uncomfortable for some students. For this reason, teachers need to treat these topics with utmost care, in order to ensure a safe learning environment for everyone. L2 teachers always need to analyse the importance of students' self-initiated turns for the pedagogical foci, and respond according to their understanding of what is beneficial for the language learning and for the students as individuals as well as for a group of learners.

Appendix A: Transcription conventions

- [] Point of overlap onset and termination
- = No interval between adjacent utterances

(0.6)	Interval between utterances
(.)	Short untimed pause
w <u>o</u> rd	Speaker emphasis
e:r	Lengthening of the sound
-	Abrupt cut-off
? /, /.	Rising/low rising/falling intonation
WORD	Loud sounds relative to surrounding talk
°word°	Quiet talk relative to surrounding talk
£word£	Smiling voice
@word@	Changed voice quality
↓↑	Marked shifts into higher or lower pitch
<word>	Talk produced slowly
>word<	Talk produced quickly
(--)	Unclear speech
(word)	Transcriber's doubt
.hh / hh	Speaker in-/out-breath
(())	Transcriber's comment
->	lines of special interest

Participants' focal embodied actions have been transcribed in capital letters underneath the lines representing spoken interaction. When relevant, the precise moment of the teacher's embodied actions is indicated by an asterisk (*) and students' by the plus sign (+).

Appendix B: Abbreviations used in glossing

1pS first person, singular

2pS	second person, singular
3pS	third person, singular
NEG	negation
NEG POL	negative polaric suffix
PRT	particle
TRANS	transitive verb
PAR	partitive case

Notes

- 1 Extract 4 is an exception: a student volunteers to answer on behalf of another student the teacher's prior question.
- 2 The omitted lines include other students suggesting that Anja loves a boy from another group.
- 3 The endings of the partitive case in standard Finnish are *-a*, *-ä*, *-ta* and *-tä* (Karlsson 1999: 76–81).
- 4 The teacher asks what *bling bling* means and the students collaboratively explain that the term describes a rich hiphop man with a lot of rings.

Inkeri Lehtimaja is a postdoctoral researcher at the Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies at the University of Helsinki and Lecturer in Finnish Language at Aalto University, Helsinki. Her research interests cover classroom interaction, second language teaching and learning and professional language, and her main method is conversation analysis. She has also taught Finnish as a second language in basic education. Address for correspondence: Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, P.O. Box 4, 00014 University of Helsinki, Finland. Email: inkeri.lehtimaja@helsinki.fi

Liisa Tainio is a Professor of Finnish Language and Literature Education at the Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki (Finland). She has studied various aspects of Finnish language use, especially everyday conversations and classroom interaction as well as other learning environments. She has also analysed written text, such as textbooks. Her main research methods include conversation analysis and discourse analysis combined with gender and language studies. Address for Correspondence: Faculty of Educational Sciences, P.O. Box 9, 00014 University of Helsinki, Finland. Email: liisa.tainio@helsinki.fi

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